



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 15 April 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
15 APRIL 1967

1. Laos

The Communists seem increasingly concerned about the effect of our military operations--particularly air strikes--on their supply routes and depots in Laos.

On Wednesday the Russians proposed to the British a joint statement by the two nations as co-chairmen of the 1962 Geneva Conference condemning US military activity in Laos. Ambassador Dobrynin followed up on the same day with a demarche to Ambassador Kohler here.

While both the proposed joint statement and the demarche list a number of US sins in Laos, they show a particular sensitivity to air operations, including B-52 raids.

Moscow may also be concerned at the extent to which Souvanna is himself eroding the tripartite structure of his government. The right wing has just about swallowed the neutralists. Some Soviet pressure on Souvanna may well follow these diplomatic moves.

2. Soviet Union

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3. Soviet Union

One Yevgeny Pitovranov has recently identified himself to Embassy Moscow as one of the top men in the Russian Chamber of Commerce. He has had talks with the embassy counselors for economic and cultural affairs, and has expressed special interest in developing international trade--an area for which he claims special responsibility.

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4. Soviet Union - India

L. K. Jha, an aide close to Prime Minister Gandhi, says that Moscow has told the Indians that it is willing to guarantee India and other neutralist nations against both nuclear blackmail and nuclear attack in connection with a nonproliferation treaty. Jha was in Moscow last week and is now in Washington.

Jha also says that the Russians are "much more forthcoming" on security assurances than earlier, and that Gromyko told him the US and the Soviets should issue separate but parallel declarations on this when the treaty is opened for signature.

Moscow's new position will surely bring a big uproar from the Chinese, but the Soviets no longer seem to care about Peking's charges of US-Soviet "collusion."

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5. Israel-Syria

Tensions are high again. Israeli troops are now positioned within the Demilitarized Zone itself, and the Syrians are claiming that even more land there should be added to the disputed category. United Nations observers are trying to cool things off but are getting little cooperation from either side. New incidents are expected at any time.

6. Greece

General elections are set for 28 May following the dissolution of parliament yesterday. Ex-premier Papandreou has already said that the monarchy will be the prime issue in the campaign. If anything resembling a Papandreou victory appears likely, the King may encourage a right-wing dictatorship to block it.

This might work for the short run, but the long-term effects would probably be disastrous. The various leftist elements would likely band together, but this would only bring on fierce counteraction from the right. Chaos--favorable only to the Communists--might well ensue.

Greece has been on the edge of this precipice before, however, and has always managed to step back.

7. Cuba

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